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ABSTRACT

This collection of abstracts is part of a continuing series providing information on recent doctoral dissertations. The 21 titles deal with the following topics: (1) the adolescent writer's developing sense of audience; (2) the entry skills, methods, and attitudes of intermediate composition students in postsecondary composition programs; (3) field-dependence/independence as they relate to referential, expressive, and persuasive writing; (4) the revising processes of twelfth grade student writers; (5) letter writing as a mediation process between private and public ways of knowing; (6) "wordplay" as multiple signaling; (7) cognitive style and errors in standard usage in written compositions; (8) cohesion in the expository texts of ninth grade students; (9) popular scientific discourse; (10) writing mode and linguistic insecurity; (11) the coherence of writing done in academic contexts; (12) cohesive elements in written business discourse; (13) the rhetorical organization of American-English and Persian expository paragraphs; (14) stylistic features of superior freshman essays; (15) observed composing processes in three types of discourse; (16) psycholinguistic processes in composition; (17) developmental patterns in the production of written analogies; (18) viewing writing in terms of developmental psychology; (19) lexical fields and writing instruction; (20) the relation between reading and writing abilities; and (21) the patterns of development in essays of remedial, average, and advanced writers. (RL)

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Written Language and Writing Abilities:

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THE ADOLESCENT WRITER'S DEVELOPING SENSE OF AUDIENCE: IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHING
Order No. 7926348

BAILEY, Phoebe Lydia, Ph.D. Purdue University, 1979. 172pp.
Major Professor: Arnold L. Lazarus

This dissertation is a synoptic study of reforms in the teaching of writing within the past two decades. In lieu of a definitive structure for teaching writing, a tentative theoretical framework is proposed on the basis of two hypotheses. First, it is proposed that teaching based on personal and linguistic growth produces the most efficient learning because it accommodates to individual differences in the capacity for abstract thought. Second, it is argued that there is a reciprocal relationship between the activity of the learner, his development, and the processes of using language and the adolescent writer's developing sense of audience.

Chapter One presents an historical overview of basic issues in the teaching of English that persist into the present. The major controversy arises from issues in defining the goals and methods of English according to subject-centered or student-centered curricula. It is contended that the activity of students in using language is primary in providing them with ways of organizing and coping with reality.

In Chapter Two it is proposed that the developmental psychology of Jean Piaget suggests a conceptual framework for describing the stages by which the student attains mature thought.

Chapter Three notes how the affective socialization of the adolescent is correlated to his cognitive maturity. Thus, how the writer feels about himself and his subject matter may affect what he writes.

Chapter Four examines theoretical bases for considering writing a unique mode of learning. Theories of major contemporary psychologists on the relationship of thought and language point to the relationship of learning to write and the development of deliberate abstract thought. In addition, the insights of advocates of student-centered curricula are contrasted to the premises of advocates of the traditional view of the disciplinary value of learning to write from the study of literature.

Chapter Five develops the central idea of the dissertation, sense of audience as a generative concept. The generative capability of the concept of audience is founded on a classical ideal; however, the student's sense of audience depends on a realistic picture of what is involved in making abstractions; that is, how he and others create ideas. A framework for guiding the student's language activities in the writer-audience-subject transaction is summarized.

The conclusion is devoted to the implications for teaching. The small group cross-commentary--the writing workshop--allows the student to operate as both receiver and producer of discourse. The primary movement of growth is from the center of self outward. Literature can also fulfill special functions in expanding the personal perspective and familiarizing the student with the conventions of English. However, it is argued that in learning to write for different audiences in increasingly abstract forms of discourse, the student gains control of the processing of experience for himself and for others.

THE ENTRY SKILLS, METHODS AND ATTITUDES OF THE INTERMEDIATE COMPOSITION STUDENT IN A POST-SECONDARY COMPOSITION PROGRAM Order No. 8008771

BOVA, RITA JOANNE, PH.D. *The Ohio State University*, 1979. 208pp.
Adviser: Professor Donald R. Bateman

The findings of this study have identified the intermediate composition student as having needs and problems not previously recognized or defined by traditional composition research or writing programs. According to the "Daly-Miller Empirical Instrument to Measure Writing Apprehension," the intermediate writer tested as most fearful of writing as compared to the basic and advanced composition students in the study. Moreover, intermediates seemed least engaged by or interested in communication activities, especially writing.

The intermediate writer was evaluated as having particular stylistic and grammatical problems in his/her writings, such as an unfocused thesis, ambiguous vocabulary usage, an insecure rhetorical voice, passive grammatical constructions, sentence level errors, and a confused idiomatic use of the language.

Within the group of intermediate writers emerged degrees of intermediacy: true intermediate, moderate-intermediate, and advanced intermediate. These degrees were determined by the amount of stylistic and error types demonstrated in the student essays. The true intermediate exhibited the highest number of errors and stylistics as well as the highest level of apprehension toward writing.

There appears to be a connection between the level of writing apprehension and the type of style and voice in a student's essay. A high level of fear generally matches with the true intermediate's passive, unfocused writing style and timidity toward his/her audience. The findings of this study suggest that emotional blocks can inhibit clear, even correct, writing to a striking degree. Case studies were undertaken to fully analyze specific individuals within the study. In each case, emotional blocks, such as anxiety and fear, restricted the particular student's writing and aggravated already existing grammatical difficulties.

The research for this study was conducted in Autumn Quarter, 1977. Following a pilot study at The Ohio State University, the researcher distributed questionnaires to 269 entering composition students at The Columbus Technical Institute (82 advanced, 89 intermediate, and 98 basic composition students). The questionnaires revealed that intermediate students exhibited the greatest level of fear and resentment toward writing at both The Ohio State University and at Columbus Technical Institute.

Written placement essays of the three groups of entering composition students at Columbus Technical Institute were read and analyzed for particular identifying features and errors. The intermediate's marked tendency toward a vague, passive, and muddled writing style was noted. This observation was later validated by a juried rating of randomly selected essays from the three groups by a team of professional English teachers.

The study's findings indicated a real need for a more sensitive and knowledgeable treatment of intermediate students by teachers of composition and by composition programs in general.

FIELD-DEPENDENCE-INDEPENDENCE AND WRITING AND REVISION IN THE REFERENTIAL, EXPRESSIVE, AND PERSUASIVE AIMS Order No. 8012355

BOYD, CAROL ANNE, PH.D. *The University of Iowa*, 1979. 189pp.
Supervisor: Assistant Professor Paul Diehl

This study was conducted at Black Hawk College, a community college in Moline, Illinois, during the 1979 spring semester. The study classified students enrolled in seven classes of freshman composition as field-dependent or field-independent and then compared their performance on three twenty-minute writing tasks and the revisions of these tasks. The initial group of 120 students was classified according to their scores on the Group Embedded Figures Test (GEFT). Those scoring in the first quartile on the GEFT were considered field-independent; those scoring in the fourth quartile were considered field-dependent. GEFT scores for these two groups were 15-18 and 0-6 respectively. Those scoring in the second and third quartiles were eliminated from the final sample, which then included 58 students.

The three writing tasks were designed to be scored with Primary Trait Scoring, a team approach which assesses how closely a piece of discourse comes to achieving its aim and rates it on a four-point scale. The referential, expressive, and persuasive aims were selected because they form the tripartite model that corresponds to the emphasis of recent theories of discourse on subject, audience, and speaker. The three primary trait scoring guides and the revision scoring guide were modeled after guides used by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

The four hypotheses being tested and their results are as follows: (1) In traditional freshman composition, field-independent students will receive higher grades for the course and attend class more frequently than field-dependent students. The first part of this hypothesis was supported, and the second was not. Field-independent students received a grade an average of six tenths of a grade point higher than field-dependent students (significant at the .01 level), but they attended class less. (2) When asked to write with the three aims, the field-independent students will come closer than the field-dependent to achieving the aim of each piece of discourse when it is scored according to its primary trait. This was supported for referential writing (significant at the .01 level), but not for expressive or persuasive writing. (3) When asked to revise the three pieces of writing, the field-dependent students will make fewer changes than the field-independent. (4) On the same revisions, field-dependent students will limit themselves to

superficial kinds of revisions, while those of the field-independent students will be more extensive. Neither of the revision hypotheses was supported; there was no difference between the two groups in either volume or kinds of revision.

The results suggest that field-dependence-independence may be a factor in student success in freshman composition, particularly since the course often requires a high proportion of referential (or expository) writing. Further study of the relationship between cognitive style and writing is definitely warranted.

REVISING PROCESSES IN TWELFTH GRADE STUDENTS' TRANSACTIONAL WRITING

Order No. 8010570

BRIDWELL, LILLIAN SASSER, ED.D. *University of Georgia*, 1979. 225pp. Director: Roy C. O'Donnell

Revision has been traditionally designated as a terminal state in the writing process involving superficial mechanical and stylistic operations or reformulations of a text after an initial draft has been produced. The accounts of professional writers' processes and some existing case studies on the composing process contradict this view of revision. The present study was designed to investigate the actual revision processes of twelfth grade mixed ability writers who were asked to write and revise a transactional or informative essay for an audience of peers without intervention. An exhaustive and mutually exclusive scheme for classifying revisions was developed and tested for reliability. The influences of the various types and times of revision were analyzed for their effects on qualitative ratings.

Revisions in 100 randomly selected sets of first and second drafts were classified according to seven linguistic units: surface, word, phrase, clause, sentence, multiple-sentence, and text levels. Each of these levels was further subclassified according to the operations possible at each level. Further, three distinct times when revision occurred were designated as "stages" of revision: Stage A (in-process, first draft), Stage B (between-draft), and Stage C (in-process, second draft).

A total of 6,129 revisions were coded by the researcher and checked by two trained coders for reliability (84.43% agreement for all three). Reliabilities ranging from .89 to .97 were obtained for analytic quality ratings (general merit, mechanics, and total) of typed versions of the two drafts.

Surface and word level revisions proved to be the most frequent units of revision. Students made four times as many in-process changes as between-draft changes. Surface and word level changes occurred more frequently at Stages A and C, while phrase, clause, sentence, and multiple-sentence frequencies increased from A to B and from B to C. The ten least extensively revised papers were among the shortest and tended to receive lower quality ratings. The ten most extensively revised papers were among the longest, but received a range of quality ratings. Indexes of revisions per 100 words showed that essay length was not significantly related to overall frequency of revision, however.

The results revealed that overall the second drafts were qualitatively superior to the first drafts and that there were differences in the effects of the various levels and stages. A significant negative relationship existed with surface level frequencies at Stages A and C (in-process). In addition to initial quality ratings, the following variables were significant predictors of quality using step-wise multiple regression analyses: word level, sentence level, Stage B, and clause level at Stage B. The papers with the highest ratings contained more between-draft revisions across all levels than papers with lower ratings. The papers with the lowest ratings most frequently included surface and word level revisions at Stages A and C (in-process). The lowest rated second drafts also contained a substantial number of multiple-sentence substitutions, indicating that these students were rewriting rather than altering the first draft.

The results suggested definite developmental differences for the range of writing abilities respresented in the sample of twelfth grade writers. Revision for the writers of the poorer papers involved substantial in-process alterations of surface and word level units of discourse. The better writers made many of the same kinds of in-process changes, but also attended to between-draft rereading and revision.

THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE OBSERVING EGO: LETTER WRITING AS A MEDIATION PROCESS BETWEEN PRIVATE AND PUBLIC WAYS OF KNOWING

Order No. 7927909

BROOKS, NORMA R., ED.D. *Harvard University*, 1979. 308pp.

The Growth and Development of the Observing Ego: Letter Writing as a Mediation Process Between Private and Public Ways of Knowing is a twofold exploration into letter writing: it deals with the process of letter writing and with the educational/clinical implications of letter writing in a school context. My interest in letter writing developed in 1974, when 32 multi-ethnic fifth-grade children (Black, Hispanic, Chinese) in a public school on the Lower East Side of Manhattan corresponded with me, their teacher, during the course of one school year.

The first part (Chapters One through Four), the theoretical portion, looks at the process of letter writing. A review of the literature reveals that letters have played an important role in educational and clinical settings and as statements of personal, sociological, and political histories. In general, the main focus has been on letter writing as technique, treatment, or documentation.

However, it is the *process* of letter writing that defines the subject and scope of the first part of the thesis. To this end, the work of Alfred Schutz, a phenomenological sociologist, is presented. After critically examining the philosophical underpinnings of his theory of letter writing, I point out the contradictions in his overall conceptual framework that make his basic supposition about letter writing untenable.

To address these problems, an examination of the theories of the Russian psychologist L. S. Vygotsky is presented. Vygotsky charts the ontogenetic development of written speech as it mediates between private and public ways of knowing. According to Vygotsky, the balancing of inner and outer operations moves dynamically along the continuum of most private to most public, with some contexts facilitating more inner-directedness and other contexts facilitating more outer-directedness. The multifunctional nature of written communication reflects this delicate balance, with personal letter writing standing midway between the most private and most public. However, this status is not rigidly fixed along the continuum; it is always in motion.

The second part of the thesis (Chapters Five through Ten), the applied theory, describes a study that was conducted in a public school in Massachusetts. The research is a non-equivalent control-group design, with two groups of teachers and two groups of students. The treatment, which was administered to 7 teachers and 127 students, consisted of a letter-writing intervention (teachers corresponded with the children in their classrooms), weekly group meetings, "as-if" exercises in hypothetical role playing, and the teachers' analyses of actual correspondence, in addition to normal ongoing classroom activity.

The letter writing and group meetings seem to have the effect of increasing teachers' repertoire of ways to listen and respond, and of providing a way to stay close to the given "data"--the children's own thoughts and perceptions about reality. From the children's perspective, the letter writing appears to have been a profound experience, particularly for those who were voluntary letter writers.

WORDPLAY: A VARIETY OF MULTIPLE SIGNALLING

Order No. 7918945

CASE, Norman, Ph.D. New York University, 1979. 184pp. Adviser: Professor Robert A. Fowkes

This dissertation examines wordplay, a variety of multiple signalling (in which more than one message is contained simultaneously in a given utterance) and specifies its structure and occurrence. The study is psycholinguistic and lexical.

Various aspects of word association processes are examined in detail. It emerges from this analysis that wordplay is closely related to these processes and has its origin within them. The varieties of association include both semantic and phonological.

The main contribution is the development of a typology which is both analytical and classificatory, based primarily on a first corpus drawn from contemporary journalistic sources. An additional corpus drawn from earlier periods confirms the typology already stated and also adds to it. This is because certain types not found in the first corpus are encountered in the second.

The revised and expanded typology is divided into two main groups. The first deals with wordplay that involves the allusion

of a stated unit to one that is absent (not stated). The second group treats wordplay that involves the mutual allusion of two or more stated units. The first group is called Singles and the second Mutual. There is also a third division, consisting of one type only, which is termed Nameplay. It deals with allusive names and is found only in written works.

The second corpus includes over a hundred examples from Shakespeare. In addition, two collections of wordplay are examined which are dated 1826 and 1866. Finally, certain examples from Freud are presented, which cover from the beginning to the end of the nineteenth century. Thus, a considerable time span is covered in this study, yet no fundamental changes in the wordplay are observed. In more recent times, however, a larger variety of types are found.

The typology itself, with its notational system, must be studied in order to be used. There is little technical difficulty involved. Consequently, with a minimal expenditure of effort required, this system can serve as a useful instrument, in studying, for students of linguistics, psychology or literature.

Sixteen distinctive types of wordplay have been discovered in this study. Two of the Mutuals have subdivisions, in which a number of the types from the Singles group are included. Thus, a rich variety of wordplay is demonstrated. The numerous journalists whose names appear with the examples from the first corpus show that the practice of wordplay today is very much alive and quite widespread.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ERRORS IN STANDARD USAGE IN WRITTEN COMPOSITIONS OF COLLEGE STUDENTS AND THE STUDENTS' COGNITIVE STYLES

Order No. 8013093

COOPER, GRACE CHARLOTTE WASHINGTON, PH.D. *Howard University*, 1979. 221pp.

During the past decade, educators and others have identified a writing "crisis" among college students and have identified several possible causes, including the admission of large numbers of minority students who speak and write a nonstandard dialect, and have searched for solutions to the problem. The present study addresses the writing problem by attempting to determine the relationship between unsatisfactory academic writing performance and the cognitive style of the student writer. The study is based on theories from both linguistics and psychology.

The linguistic focus of the study is consistent with recent pragmatically based theories of language acquisition advanced by linguists such as Halliday (1977). These theories were chosen because they provide an explanation for difference in language use between sub-groups of the same broad language community and at the same time allow for individual differences. A second area of linguistics on which the present study draws is the sociolinguistic study of language varieties specifically, the work on Black vernacular English done by linguists such as Wolfram and Fasold (1974).

The psychological orientation of the study was based on research in the area of cognitive style centering on the theory of field dependence (FD) or holistic thinking and field independence (FI) or analytic thinking. This particular school of thought was chosen because it offers an explanation for differences in language use based upon cultural differences. Most researchers in the area see a continuum of cognitive style from FD to FI (cf. Cohen, 1969).

The study is based on the premise that language reflects cognitive style. The research hypotheses are that nonstandard dialect interference and transitional features are found in greater number in the writing of FD thinkers and that classification, distancing and contrastive features are more prevalent in the writing of FI thinkers.

Subjects were drawn from 194 freshmen composition students at the University of the District of Columbia who were pretested for cognitive style on the Group Embedded Figures Test (GEFT). (Witkin, et al., 1971) Ten FD subjects and ten FI subjects were chosen. Essays of these subjects were analyzed for the features indicated and data from the essays were analyzed by means of a one way analysis of variance with the independent main effect variable being cognitive classification, i.e., FD or FI, and the dependent variable being the score obtained on each of the feature measures described above. Obtained F values for each area were considered significant if they exceeded the .05 level of confidence.

Significant differences in usage were found in three areas: FI subjects were found to use greater distance ($F = 5.03$) and more classification features ($F = 7.3$) in writing than FD subjects. FD subjects were found to use significantly more transitional features than FI subjects ($F = 4.66$). No evidence for rejection of the null hypotheses was found in the areas of nonstandard dialect interference or contrast. The relatively small number of nonstandard dialect features evidenced points to possibly the need for another type of measure, such as a structural elicitation exercise. The lack of distance in the FD papers with its corresponding use of first and second person verbs is one reason for lack of opportunity for use of one dialect feature, the third person singular verb form. Lack of difference in the area of contrast may indicate that contrast is not a cognitively differentiative feature.

MEANING AND CHOICE IN WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE: A STUDY OF COHESION IN THE EXPOSITORY TEXTS OF NINTH GRADERS

Order No. 8003647

EILER, MARY ANN, PH.D. *Illinois Institute of Technology*, 1979. 515pp. Co-Advisers: Dr. Mackie J-V Blanton and Dr. Alva L. Davis

Linguistic options involving lexis, conjunction, reference, substitution, and ellipsis as selected by 15 ninth graders in the development of expository essays about literature written at three month intervals in the school year (Tasks I, II, and III) were analyzed according to the coding system for cohesion developed by Halliday and Hasan. The categories of cohesion were, in addition, correlated to the contextual descriptors of the register *Writing about Literature*, namely the Field, Tenor, and Mode of the discourse. Field was defined as the primary or literary text about which the students wrote, in this case narrative fiction having participants, objects, and events. Field also included the secondary text, namely the treatment of narrative fiction as verbal art in an expository essay. Tenor primarily involved the role relations of author/reader and critic/audience. Mode was defined according to the values of logical sequence, methods of development, and the ordering of information. An oral component of the thesis consisted of taped composition conferences where students verbalized their intentions to mean and the choices they were making. Although no systematic correlation of tapes with linguistic analysis was attempted, the tapes were studied in terms of the values of Field, Tenor, and Mode. Percentages of the various types of cohesive relations for each Task were tabulated. Lexical cohesion was found to include not only lexical semantic relations within English but also Field-bound and instantial relations within individual texts. Lexical cohesive relations were also found to exist on rank levels of word, phrase, and clause as defined in systemic grammar. Lexical options selected by the students were displayed in relationally ordered networks as *descriptors* of permissible systems within the register *Writing about Literature*. Lexical cohesion viewed in the context of Field-bound and instantial meaning relations had implications for deciphering the code of a text and for examining the nature of the students' response to literature. Reference cohesion was an indicator of the students' ability to sustain a self-sufficient expository text without appeal to the immediate social environment. Conjunctive relations that indicated (1) the linguistic organization of the secondary text as opposed to those that indicated (2) the experiential recording of the primary text within the secondary text provided an index for the development of Mode values by the students over the school year.

THE READING-WRITING CONNECTION: AN ANALYSIS OF THE WRITTEN LANGUAGE OF UNIVERSITY FRESHMEN AT TWO READING LEVELS

Order No. 8003579

HELLER, MARY FEUERBORN, ED.D. *Oklahoma State University*, 1979. 172pp.

Scope and Method of Study. The present study investigated 34 university freshmen's reading comprehension in relation to 21 syntactic elements of written language produced through their expository writing. It should be noted that this study examined syntactic maturity, not writing quality. Subjects in the study were drawn from beginning composition classes at Oklahoma State University during the spring semester, 1979. Language samples included one silent reading comprehension test which identified "high" and "low" readers and two expository in-class themes, one developed through classification, the other through comparison/contrast. Themes were subjected to syntactic analysis of 21 elements of written language chosen for their known contribution to syntactic maturity and their possible relationship with reading comprehension.

Findings and Conclusions. Results of statistical comparisons indicated that there are at least eleven elements of written language significantly related to reading comprehension. The eleven are the following: number of words/T-unit, T-units/sentence, words/subordinate clause, words/main

clause passive verbs, prepositional phrases, gerunds and participles, intra-T-unit coordinators, free final modifiers, words/clause, and Syntactic Density Score (a composite score reflecting total syntactic complexity). Good readers' writing was characterized by long T-units expanded through such nonclausal structures as prepositional phrases, intra-T-unit coordination of detail, and passive verb phrases. Generally, their writing contained more deletion transformations than did poor readers' writing. The low reading group produced shorter T-units expanded primarily through the addition of subordinate clauses. This group also used more coordinated main clauses and run-on sentences than did the high group.

A discussion of possible reasons to account for the established reading-writing connections centered around characteristics common to both language processes, i.e., Good readers' linguistic awareness of complex grammatical structures may be the result of positive reading experiences. Internalized knowledge of these language structures is reflected in the syntactic maturity of their writing. Other explanations concerned theories of language modeling, egocentrism in writing and reading, and the need for redundancy in writing and reading.

POPULAR SCIENTIFIC DISCOURSE: A RHETORICAL MODEL FOR TEACHING WRITING AND READING Order No. 8002370

HOPKINS, ROBERT MORRIS, PH.D. *University of Missouri - Columbia*, 1979. 365pp. Supervisor: Ben F. Nelms

Purpose. Two related purposes served as a rationale for the study. The first purpose was to identify through three types of analysis some of the important structural and semantic characteristics of popular scientific discourse. Popular scientific discourse was stipulatively defined as writing by professional scientists intended to inform the layman and the nonspecialist about the methods used and the discoveries made in investigations into the natural sciences. The second purpose was to determine from the analyses whether pervasive structural patterns were to be found. Their existence would be considered a sufficient reason for constructing a conceptual rhetorical model and suggesting methods to aid in the teaching of writing and reading of popular scientific discourse to students in college level technical and scientific writing classes.

The following questions were asked and tentatively answered during the course of the study: (1) What are the major structures which pervade the whole pieces of scientific discourse taken as samples from selected periodicals? (2) What are the organizational structures subsumed under the major structures? (3) Do combination structures result from the major and organizational structures which may help to define and delimit popular scientific discourse? (4) Are there pervasive features occurring within and between sentences which might help to define and delimit popular scientific discourse? (5) To what extent is there variety in organizational patterns and in syntactic units in the samples examined? (6) Do the findings of the study imply that they should in some way be useful in teaching composition? (7) In light of the evidence gathered, what are the most plausible ways that these discoveries might be put to use?

Procedures. Thirty-two periodical articles were randomly selected from *American Scientist, National Geographic, Natural History, Science,* and *Scientific American.* All of the sentences of six randomly selected paragraphs from each article were analyzed, using the tagmemic clause analysis procedures described by Arena in *Linguistics for Composition* (1975).

From the thirty-two articles six were randomly selected for an analysis of larger structures. Gopnik's major structures, described in *Linguistic Structures in Scientific Texts* (1972), and Monroe, Meredith, and Fisher's organizing structures, described in *The Science of Scientific Writing* (1977), served as the basis for a more extensive system of analysis to reveal semantic structures which indicate the principal concerns involved in conducting scientific investigations and reporting those investigations.

Another type of analysis was done to identify cohesive ties between sentences. From five randomly chosen articles no fewer than three sequential paragraphs were selected from each article for the analysis. A simplified version of Halliday and Hasan's methods, described in *Cohesion in English* (1977), was used for the analysis for cohesion.

Selected Conclusions. The tagmemic clause analysis revealed the degree of complexity of the sentences (the average number of clauses per sentence is 2.5). It was discovered that transitive clauses were most extensively used and that passive clauses were infrequently used, accounting for no more than 12 percent of the total number of clauses in all of the samples. It was discovered that of the larger structures Scientific Study and Conclusion structures (defined in the dissertation) occur most frequently. The analysis for cohesion revealed that lexical ties comprise the majority of cohesive ties in the samples.

Recommendations. Because the analyses of the samples reveal that a variety of structures and pervasive features do exist in sufficient numbers to help characterize the genre popular scientific discourse, it is recommended that the student be taught to use the systems of analysis described and used in the present study as aids in composing his own popular scientific discourse.

WRITING MODE AND LINGUISTIC INSECURITY Order No. 7922502

HURLOW, Marcia Lynn, Ph.D. The Ohio State University, 1979. 143pp. Adviser: Professor Donald R. Bateman

Current research on composition has established that not merely the audience but also the purpose for a piece of writing and the student's feelings about his abilities to produce that writing will affect the student's writing itself. Writing Mode and Linguistic Insecurity explores the hypothesis that the greater the student's linguistic insecurity, the greater the formal syntactic differences between his writing in graded essays and in unevaluated work. This study also develops a new instrument for measuring linguistic insecurity, and examines the use of both quantitative and qualitative methodology to investigate a problem in composition.

To determine the students' linguistic insecurity, the study used surveys, interviewing techniques, and a linguistic insecurity test based on that used by William Labov in The Social Stratification of English in New York City. Of the possible audiences and purposes for writing, two were chosen: the "poetic" and the "reflexive". British composition theorists James Britton et al. (The Development of Writing Abilities, 11-18, 1975) ascertained that most writing for the teacher was "poetic": it is done merely to complete the writing task, for an artificial audience who evaluates the piece of writing as an object. "Reflexive" writing, on the other hand, is defined by Janet Emig as writing for oneself; it is contemplative and relatively free of external demands on how one expresses oneself. Reflexive writing is thus more likely to occur in a secure writing situation. In this study, graded essays represented writing in the poetic mode, and journals, which were only graded by counting the number of pages, represented writing in the reflexive mode.

Using my forty-eight freshman composition students and forty-three remedial composition students at Ohio State University during the 1978-1979 academic year as subjects, the quantitative data of the study included the total number of words in the piece of writing, the number of clauses, the number of the fifteen clause types considered, the number of t-units, and the length of the average t-unit in each student's first journal and essay of the course. This data was then correlated with the students' scores on the linguistic insecurity test.

The qualitative data was gathered from in-depth case studies of five remedial students. For the case studies I not only considered all of the kinds of data that I did for the quantitative section, but also other types of linguistic and rhetorical analysis and for all of the writing that these students did for their courses. I also included information from working with the students as they wrote, from attitude surveys and interviews done at intervals throughout the quarter, and as much about their general background as I could obtain.

This research has shown that there tend to be fewer of the characteristics generally associated with sophisticated writing when the writer is insecure. The insecure student often has strikingly less sophisticated writing in essays for the teacher than in writing for himself or an uncritical, friendly audience. As demonstrated in the case studies, linguistic insecurity also is correlated with a decrease in the "well-formedness" of syntactic structures, the detail of examples, and the general fluency of the prose. Further, linguistically insecure students edit more while they compose rather than leave editing for a later stage of the paper as more linguistically secure students tend to do.

A STUDY OF COHERENCE: IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHING WRITING IN AN ACADEMIC CONTEXT

Order No. 8003282

JACOBS, SUZANNE EBERHART, ED.D. *University of Hawaii*, 1979. 208pp.

The purpose of the investigation was to study the problems students have in writing coherent prose in an academic context in which the information load is heavy. Part of this purpose was to develop a descriptive tool, or construct, that would make it possible to compare pieces of writing with regard to coherence, one that would take into account the nature of the task and the nature of language, both the syntactic and semantic components of language.

The methods used for the analysis of student essays borrowed heavily from those used by linguists in analyzing the syntactic structure of sentences. Selected essays were examined intensively, sentence by sentence. Component deep structure sentences of each surface sentence were examined for verb type and sentence topic. The semantic/logical links of cause, comparison, and so forth, both within and between sentences, were also noted.

The essays were written by the eleven students enrolled in Biomed 405, an advanced biology course designed under the direction of the University of Hawaii School of Medicine. The course was part of a year-long review program, which aimed to prepare minority and Pacific Island students for admission to the medical school. Sample essays were analyzed in detail for six students, who had varying degrees of success in learning the course content. The essays were written in class and required a synthesis of material learned from lectures and their textbooks.

It was found that coherence in such a writing context could be described in general terms by the notion of *predication load*. The *load* was a measure of the integration carried out by the student writer in the process of writing each sentence. The load became greater as the student combined more and more pieces of information. Pieces of information were defined--roughly speaking--as the deep sentences (or predications) underlying the surface sentences. These predications, classified by semantic type and counted for each surface sentence, provided a measure of the complexity of the task of maintaining coherence. For the biology writing assignments, two types of content predications were required (differentiated by the syntactic character by the verb). Also required were relational predications such as statements (implied or explicit) of cause, specification, comparison, and so on.

Of the six students whose essays were studied in detail, two students had difficulties maintaining coherence. Both had difficulties stemming from problems with the task of integration. When relational information had to be combined with content information, sentences became labored, clumsy, or grammatically incorrect. A common writing strategy was to avoid integration, in which case the essays appeared to have *chunks* of information. These chunks, though easy to read and generally correct, were not made relevant by the writer to the essay's main idea.

Such results have developmental implications. They suggest that the learning of content information may temporarily interfere with the writer's ability to maintain coherence. In subject matter courses, where both new information and coherence in writing are important for instructional goals, writing assignments can be modified so as to take into account these developmental difficulties. The assignments themselves can be written so as to impose either high or low predication loads. Samples of each are provided, together with their suggested use.

A COMPARISON OF COHESIVE ELEMENTS IN AMERICAN BUSINESS AND NON-NATIVE SPEAKER WRITTEN DISCOURSE

JOHNS, Ann McClelland, Ph.D. University of Southern California, 1979. Chairman: Professor Leslie E. Wilbur

Purpose. The purpose of this study was twofold: to compare the incidence and distribution of cohesive elements in two American written business modes (letters and annual reports) with each other and with the written discourse of five selected non-native speaker groups (speakers of Japanese, Other Oriental Languages, Romance Languages, Farsi, and Arabic), and to analyze cohesive element error in the written discourse of the selected groups.

Procedure. The Halliday and Hasan cohesive element coding scheme (1976) was the instrument selected for analysis of the corpuses chosen. Elements in this scheme are divided into five categories: reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, and lexical cohesion. This instrument was employed to determine the incidence and distribution of cohesive elements in the letter corpus, consisting of ten sales letters, five letters of adjustment, and five miscellaneous business letters, each of which emanated from a different American business or educational institution. The scheme was then employed to code twenty conceptual paragraphs, each from a different annual report selected at random from the sixty-five companies included in the compilation of the Dow Jones averages. The non-native speaker corpus consisted of 214 writing samples of a number of rhetorical modes (e.g., description, classification) representing the selected language groups. From each group, five conceptual paragraphs were randomly selected and coded for cohesive element incidence and distribution. All 214 were examined for error in cohesive element use.

Findings. Results indicated that there are distinct differences between the two American business modes, especially in the lexical cohesion and reference categories. It was found that there was as much variation in element incidence and distribution between the two American business modes as there was between each of these and each of the non-native speaker groups. In the error study, it was found that certain types of deviations were common to one or two non-native speaker groups, but that some errors were found in the writing of most of the groups studied. Although non-native speakers made extensive use of elements from the lexical cohesion and reference categories, error was most often found in conjunction and reference.

Conclusions. The results of this study indicated that the mode of disclosure employed (e.g., report) was more important in determining incidence and distribution of cohesive elements than was the first language of the writer. Error data indicated that frequency of element use was not consistent with error occurrence. Due to the results indicated in this study, it was concluded that in ESL curriculum and instruction, presentations which closely ally cohesive elements to mode of discourse and, in some cases, to the first language of the learner, might be most beneficial.

Recommendations. Recommendations included: (1) Further study be made to investigate the incidence and distribution of cohesive elements in other English for Special Purposes (e.g., Science and Technology) written or spoken discourse. (2) Investigation be made of features contributing to cohesion but not mentioned in the Halliday and Hasan scheme. (3) Studies be made of additional features of the business modes. (4) Further investigation be made of the frequency and distribution of cohesive items in native and non-native speaker discourse, by replicating this study or by employing another approach, such as determining cohesive item frequency. (5) Additional studies be made which determine whether intersentential errors are related to intra-sentential ones. (6) Continued emphasis be made in future English as a Second Language research and curriculum development upon the nature of discourse and its textual features.

A CONTRASTIVE STUDY OF THE RHETORICAL ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN-ENGLISH AND PERSIAN EXPOSITORY PARAGRAPHS

Order No. 7918857

MAFTOON-SEMNANI, Parviz, Ph.D. New York University, 1979. 177pp. Chairperson: Professor Harvey Nadler

In writing expository English, acceptability is achieved not only by constructing well-formed sentences, but also by arranging sentences according to the rhetorical conventions of English. It is believed that the rules determining acceptable sequences in discourse are culturally conditioned and vary from language to language. Therefore, rhetoric, the method of organizing syntactic units into larger sequences of discourse, is not universal but is dependent upon the logical reasoning of the speakers of a particular linguistic community.

The specific purpose of this dissertation was to investigate whether Persian paragraphs utilized different rhetorical conventions from those of English. For the purpose of a contrastive rhetoric, the content of 300 contemporary American-English and 300 contemporary Persian expository paragraphs,

written by native speakers of each language, and published in prestigious American and Iranian educational journals, were examined through the use of paragraph-analytical models proposed by Francis Christensen (College Composition and Communication, 1965, 16, 144–156) and Alton L. Becker (College Composition and Communication, 1965, 16, 237–242). Each corpus was subjected to a twofold analysis to provide answers for the following questions:

Does the outcome of the analysis indicate different rhetorical conventions of the American-English and Persian paragraphs in terms of the occurrence of topic, coordinate, subordinate, and extrasequential sentences?

Does the outcome of the analysis indicate different rhetorical conventions of the American-English and Persian paragraphs in terms of the occurrence of the T, R, I, Q, and A elements?

Findings of the Study

A quantitative analysis of the paragraphs revealed the following:

1. Persian paragraphs contained fewer sentences than American ones.

2. Persian paragraphs contained fewer words than American ones.

3. Persian sentences contained more words than American ones.

4. The percentage of occurrence of one, two, and three-sentence paragraphs was higher in the Persian corpus. (The occurrences of one-sentence paragraphs and two-sentence paragraphs were statistically significant in the Persian corpus.)

5. The percentage of occurrence of four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, and ten-sentence paragraphs was higher in the English corpus. (The occurrence of four-sentence paragraphs, six-sentence paragraphs, and seven-sentence paragraphs were statistically significant in the English corpus.

The qualitative analysis of the paragraphs revealed the following:

1. The answer to the first question of the study was positive. It was confirmed that different rhetorical conventions of the American-English and Persian paragraphs existed in terms of the occurrence of topic, coordinate, subordinate, and extra-sequential sentences.

2. The answer to the second question of the study was partially positive and partially negative. It was confirmed that different rhetorical conventions of the American-English and Persian paragraphs existed in terms of the occurrence of the T, I, and Q elements. However, the analysis failed to reveal different rhetorical conventions concerning the occurrence of the R and A elements.

3. In terms of the three sequences suggested by Christensen -- coordinate, subordinate, and mixed -- the analysis also revealed that there were rhetorical differences across the languages.

4. In terms of the two sequences suggested by Becker -- TRI and QA -- the analysis failed to reveal any significant differences across the American-English and Persian paragraphs.

SYNTAX AND SUCCESS: STYLISTIC FEATURES OF SUPERIOR FRESHMAN ESSAYS

MARTIN, Celest Ann, Ph.D. University of Southern California, 1979. Chairman: Professor W. Ross Winterowd

What is good writing and how can we teach it? The underlying assumption of this dissertation is the notion that superior writing is stylistically mature writing, and that stylistic maturity can be quantitatively measured to some degree. By combining holistic evaluation with a statistical analysis of various syntactic features, it is possible to determine what characteristics of style should be emphasized in the teaching of Freshman Composition.

The introductory chapter provides the theory behind this kind of analysis, and Chapter Two reviews both experimental and descriptive studies of student writing at several levels. The variables chosen for this particular study were selected from among those that appeared most promising in previous research. These included words per T-unit, words per clause, subordinate clauses per T-unit, percent of common verbs, percent of be's, have's and modals in the auxiliary, free modifiers, clause endings and length.

The clause endings are variables new to research in Freshman Composition. Joseph Williams isolated them as markers of significant style, a style that is clear yet forceful, and characteristic of the expository prose of skilled adult writers. These clause endings proved statistically significant, appearing only in essays ranked in the upper two-thirds by the raters. Other significant variables were the free modifiers and percentage of common verbs.

The point of this research is to provide composition instructors with features of style that are readily identified and easily taught, perhaps in combination with another technique such as sentence combining. Chapter Four provides discussion of the variables, and suggests a theory of selective sentence-combining based on their significance as presented in this and previous research.

The last chapter suggests directions for future research, stressing the need for a more complete concept of style, as well as the need for a sound theoretical structure to underlie our classroom practice. We can not be satisfied with any one method of research or teaching until our results are continuous and measurably successful, until we can demonstrate to our students and to ourselves that a course in Freshman Composition is not a waste of time.

PRODUCING WRITTEN DISCOURSE: A THEORY-BASED DESCRIPTION OF THE TEMPORAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THREE DISCOURSE TYPES FROM FOUR COMPETENT GRADE 12 WRITERS

Order No. 8005689

MATSUHASHI, ANN, PH.D. *State University of New York at Buffalo*, 1979. 402pp.

The purpose of this study was to create a temporal description of the process of composing in writing for three specific discourse types: to report, to generalize, and to persuade. Since pauses, moments of physical inactivity during composing, are assumed to reflect planning and decision-making, an examination of pauses of various lengths located at points within the text should illuminate the processes involved in the composition of various kinds of discourse.

Even though this study reports the answers to several specific research hypotheses, it is actually intended as an exploratory case study. The questions for this study result from my theory of the composing process as well as a comprehensive review of pause-time research. In part, the aim is to determine the usefulness of research in a new area: the temporal aspects of *written* language production. The study combines information about the real-time aspects of the composing process with a thorough description of the textual features of the written protocols of four competent high school writers.

The four competent high school writers who participated in this study each produced eight essays, two for each of four discourse purposes: to express, to report, to generalize, to persuade. (Only the latter are analyzed in this study.) The writers were video-taped while composing and the length of pause times between each word--to tenths of a second--were marked on typed transcripts of the compositions.

Next, profiles of the temporal characteristics of each writer's composing process were compiled for the entire data set. These profiles offered a general description of pausing and transcribing behavior, detailing information about the different composing styles of the individual writers and some information about the rhythm of transcription, the overall rates at which people transcribe whether copying or composing original discourse. In addition, these data provided, in a general way, some evidence of temporal differences in writing produced for differing discourse purposes.

The written protocols were then analyzed using four descriptive tools: *The Discourse Matrix*, which displays the hierarchical organization of the discourse; *Sentence Roles*, which establishes the semantic relationships between sentences; *Lexical Cohesion*, which identifies the ways in which particular words establish coherence between sentences; and finally *Syntax*,

which identifies the various sentence parts and establishes their relationships.

The results of this study clearly indicate that a writer's purpose for composing influences the length of pause-time necessary to plan and produce a piece of discourse. Reporting consistently required less planning time than either generalizing or persuading. And in the instance of the unusually long pauses prior to sentences, a clear pause-time continuum emerges with pause times decreasing in the following order: generalizing, persuading, reporting.

WRITING AS A SECOND LANGUAGE: PSYCHOLINGUISTIC PROCESSES IN COMPOSITION

Order No. 8002941

NEILSON, BROOKE, PH.D. *University of California, San Diego*, 1979. 181pp. Co-Chairpersons: Professor Edward S. Klima, Professor Elissa Newport

Writing as a Second Language: Psycholinguistic Processes in Composition is an attempt to develop a theory of the composing process based on psycholinguistic models of language acquisition and use. The theory follows from the assertion that, while informal writing may be a simple function of the first language acquired by the child, formal writing is not. Formal written English operates as a register which has been partially acquired by native speakers (primarily through reading). Systematic syntactic differences (which do not correlate with writing quality), a recurring, well-defined set of problems in formal register, and limited individual variation argue for a set of processes common to all writers.

This study of written register was prompted by consistently distinct performances on informal and formal writing tasks by a group of college freshman, which yielded no "errors" in the informal sample, and a finite set of recurring sentence problems in the formal sample. The thesis centers around a description of syntactic differences between the two registers; Chapter II (an analysis of syntactic differences in the formal and informal writings of fifty undergraduates enrolled in required writing courses) demonstrates a quantitative difference in measures of syntactic complexity for formal and informal registers. Correlation studies (Chapter III) demonstrate that these complexity measures are not related to writing quality (as determined by holistic scorings). Thus it is likely that the complexity differences accurately characterize the two registers.

For this population (college-level adults), written sentences are problematic only in formal registers. A finite typology of "errors" in the formal register (Chapter IV) implies that the complexity of the register induces error; however, the constructions in which such errors occur also appear in informal registers. Thus the errors are presumably triggered by differences between the registers.

Since the differences between the registers are quantitative (e.g., more nouns, longer clauses) rather than qualitative (i.e., different constructions), it cannot be said that formal register is a separate dialect in the traditional sense. Given the pervasive problems found in the formal register, however, one is forced to conclude that it functions as a separate register, and that a large enough quantitative difference is in some sense equivalent to a qualitative one.

The writers whose papers were analyzed in the thesis were well-educated, middle class speakers of standard English, yet their formal writing shows clear evidence of problems normally attributed to "basic" or "remedial" writers. This finding (that all writers apparently share a common set of composing processes) suggests that the definition of remediation needs to be rethought, perhaps in a psycholinguistic (rather than a purely linguistic) framework.

ANALOGIES PRODUCED BY CHILDREN RELATED TO GRADE LEVEL, LINGUISTIC MATURITY, READING LEVEL, AND CREATIVE ABILITY

Order No. 8006672

RUMMEL, MARY KAY SIMPSON, PH.D. *University of Minnesota*, 1979. 176pp. Adviser: Dr. Robert Dykstra

The purpose of this study was to analyze developmental patterns in the production of analogy by children and to determine whether or not children use different types of analogy as they achieve linguistic maturity. A second purpose of the study was to determine whether or not the production of analogy in free-writing is related to performance on a test of creativity and to reading level as a general indicator of school achievement. A final purpose of this research was to determine differences in analogy content in stories written in fantasy and realistic modes of narrative.

Subjects for the study included 329 second, fourth and sixth grade students from four suburban elementary schools.

Data collection was carried out in three visits to each of the twelve classrooms involved. Each group was shown two open-ended films and involved in follow-up writing sessions in which students were asked to write endings for the films. On the third classroom visit, the *Torrance Tests of Creativity*, Figural Form A, were administered and reading scores were collected from school records.

Student narratives were analyzed first for number of analogies produced. Analogies were then classified into four categories: direct, fantasy, symbolic and personal. Writing samples were also analyzed for fluency, mean length of T-unit and mode of response. In order to determine the degree of relationship between analogy production and grade level, linguistic maturity, creativity, reading and mode of response, chi-square and analyses of variance tests were performed upon the data.

The researcher was able to draw the following conclusions from the study: (1) Elementary age children do analogize spontaneously in free-writing situations. (2) The dominant type of analogy produced by children is that classified as fantasy analogy. (3) Direct and symbolic analogies are also produced at all grade levels but in relatively small numbers. (4) Elementary age children do not use personal analogy in a free-writing situation. (5) Children's production of analogy in writing is developmental to a certain extent. Fourth and sixth grade students spontaneously produce a significantly greater number of analogies than do second grade students. (6) Fourth grade students are higher analogizers than both second and sixth grade children. They produce more fantasy and symbolic analogies than the other two levels of students. There is a linear developmental pattern between grades in the production of direct analogies. (7) Children's production of analogy is not significantly related to linguistic maturity as assessed by T-unit length. When analogies are analyzed by type, symbolic analogies only are related to linguistic maturity. (8) Children's production of analogy is significantly related to creativity when scores are analyzed across grade levels. In a within-grade analysis the relationship is significant at the second grade level. (9) Grade two and grade four subjects obtain higher mean scores on the *Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking* than grade six subjects. This finding is typical of trends occurring in other creativity research. Symbolic analogy is the type most strongly, though not significantly, related to creativity. (10) Production of analogy is not significantly related to reading level across grades four and six. In a breakdown of types of analogy, direct and symbolic analogies only are related to reading level. (11) Children who write fantasy narratives produce a significantly greater number of fantasy and symbolic analogies than children who respond in a realisitic mode.

WRITING: A BRIDGE TO THE WHOLE BEING

Order No. 8012503

SANBORN, JEAN MARIE, PH.D. *Union Graduate School (Ohio)*, 1979. 362pp.

Writing is a process involving conscious and unconscious levels of the mind and body. Those who treat writing as a product or a skill become "non-writers": their writing is fitting words into pre-established molds and does not involve themselves. Non-writing is defined in this study as: "merely picking from one's store of words and syntax those forms which seem appropriate for the topic at hand," sometimes called "automatic writing." This study of writing in terms of developmental psychology brings writing into the perspective of the whole person.

An initial examination of what writers say about writing, what three novelists show when they write about writers, what researchers propose about the writing process, and what teachers do to teach writing, illustrates little consensus about the nature of the writing process except that it is an effort to bring order out of chaos and that it is a means of discovery. The stress involved in writing arises from its involvement of the whole person, making the process subject to inner and outer pressures.

Aspects of the developmental psychologies of Piaget, Erikson, and Kohlberg and the competence theory of White show points where the teaching of writing is in conflict with the student's development. More overriding concerns are language development and consciousness. Vygotsky's work indicates that writing, originating in gesture and symbolic play, is a natural part of language development. When the schools treat writing as a culturally-imposed skill, they abort the natural process and separate the student from his/her language. When writing remains a part of language and personal development, it becomes a primary means of assimilating knowledge into the students' own cognitive structures.

Research on the functions of the right and left hemispheres of the brain provides a means of understanding how writing involves the whole person and affects levels of consciousness. Spoken language in linear, originating for the most part in the analytical left hemisphere of the brain. Written

language involves the synthetic abilities of the right hemisphere, perceiving wholes through parts. The physical aspects of the writing process, especially revision, also involve a holistic mode analogous to sculpting. This study suggests that through this holistic mode writing taps the unconscious, following Jung's theories, and widens the area of consciousness.

The final chapter of this study reports and analyzes a two-year examination of the writing processes of children at Strawberry Fields, an alternative K-9 school in Freedom, Maine. The second year of the study, involving eighteen children ages 5-14, is examined in detail, including examples of the children's writing and various methods of encouraging writing. A slightly different model of development emerges from this work. Rather than occurring in steps and stages, development seems to proceed in waves, with periods of consolidation and ego strength interspersed with periods of vulnerability and withdrawal as the child begins to move to a new level, a new consciousness. During these vulnerable periods, which recur throughout life, writing activity recedes, and attempts to force public writing result in "non-writing" at best, serious ego damage at worst.

LEXICAL FIELDS AND THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH COMPOSITION Order No. 7927014

SHEFFER, Roger Evans, D.A. State University of New York at Albany, 1979. 176pp.

In this dissertation, "lexical fields" are the third level of theoretical interest for writers and writing teachers approaching the problem of sentence-generation from the perspective of the reader's perception. The other two levels of theoretical interest are "sentence segments" and "sentence connections."

These other levels have some practical application in the maintenance of continuity in the medium of writing, but have very little to do with conceptual organization. On the other hand, lexical fields, a concept from structural semantics, can be used as a resource for the conceptual organization of an expository text. Particularly useful are binary and part-whole relationships within lexical fields.

These relationships can be kept in mind by the writer when he is replacing words in patterns that have been retained from one sentence to another. Such replacements are perceived as potentially meaningful by readers; and a conceptually coherent piece of writing is made up of a number of such lexical connections.

A STUDY OF THE PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT IN ESSAYS OF THREE GROUPS OF OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY FRESHMAN WRITERS Order No. 8001858

WILLIS, DAVID MITCHELL, PH.D. *The Ohio State University*, 1979. 330pp. Adviser: Professor Edward P. J. Corbett

This dissertation examines the patterns of development found in essays of three groups of Ohio State Freshman writers: remedial, average, and advanced. The goal of the study was to describe and explain the differences in inventive skills of the student writers. The essays were written on a variety of subjects, all of which asked the students to reflect on an aspect of common experience: the image of women on television, the popularity of jeans among young people, the attraction of a sport, the unwillingness of witnesses to assist a victim of crime, and the effects of grades on learning. The essays were examined sentence-by-sentence and paragraph-by-paragraph to identify the inventive strategies or patterns of development that the students had used in discussing their subjects.

The results of the comparison of the three groups of essays are reported in four stages. The first phase compares the frequencies of the various inventive strategies of the three groups of writers. The second stage examines the frequencies of transition signals that mark the patterns of development. The third phase examines the errors in the patterns of development. The final phase compares the major patterns of development that the writers used in discussing their subjects.

The major difference among the three groups of writers was in their ability to extend an argument over successively longer passages of discourse. The essays of the remedial students revealed that those writers often encountered problems when their arguments extended over several sentences; what was said in one part of a paragraph or essay would be inconsistent with what was said elsewhere. The essays of the average students, while always under control, tended to follow a predictable pattern of introduction, discussion, and summary/conclusion; the units of discussion in these essays often did not extend beyond the bounds of individual paragraphs. The advanced writers were able to "chunk" or group larger units together to explain their ideas more fully and less predictably than either of the other two groups of writers.

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